

**Department of Transportation
State Project No. 36-195
Operational Improvements on Route 34 at Derby-Milford Road
City of Derby**

**Public Informational Meeting
March 2, 2016 - 7:00 p.m.
Derby City Hall
1 Elizabeth Street**

Minutes

Representatives Present:

Connecticut Department of Transportation:

William Britnell, P.E., Principal Engineer – Division of Highway Design
Scott Bushee, P.E., Project Manager – Division of Highway Design
Vitalij Staroverov, Project Engineer – Division of Highway Design
Jonas Hampton, Design Engineer – Division of Highway Design
Thomas Melzen, Office of Right of Way
James Massini, Project Engineer – Division of Traffic Engineering
Snow Peng, Traffic Engineer – Division of Traffic Engineering

City of Derby:

Anita Dugatto – City Mayor
Anthony Defala – Director of Public Works

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments:

Mark Nielsen – Director of Planning

Presentation: Following a brief introduction by Mr. Bushee, Mr. Staroverov gave a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation on the project. In addition, Mr. Melzen discussed the rights-of-way process.

The presentation covered the following items:

- ⇒ Project location and existing conditions, which consists of long delays on Derby-Milford Road and a pattern series of rear end crashes at the intersection. The purpose of the project is to improve the overall safety and capacity at the intersection of Derby-Milford Road and Route 34.
- ⇒ The methods for addressing safety and capacity of the intersection will consist of widening Derby-Milford Road to accommodate a 3-lane approach to Route 34. Derby-Milford Road will consist of two exclusive left turn lanes and a through-right lane. A minor retaining wall will be needed at the southeast corner of Derby-Milford Road to support the embankment for the necessary widening.

- ⇒ The project also involves adding an exclusive right turn lane on Route 34 eastbound for turns onto Derby-Milford Road southbound.
- ⇒ In addition, minor widening will be required on Sentinel Hill Road to accommodate an exclusive right turn lane to improve the operational capacity of the intersection.
- ⇒ The existing traffic signal will be replaced to accommodate additional lanes and signal phases.
- ⇒ Traffic will be maintained during construction with alternating one-way traffic on the side roads.

Public Comments and Questions: Approximately 22 residents and public officials attended, of which approximately half took the opportunity to ask questions or make comments after the presentation. The comments are summarized below:

1. A resident asked about right turn on red from Derby-Milford Road onto Route 34 eastbound and if it would be queued up with the shared through movement. The low right turning volumes and through movements will be able to make it through the intersection when the light turns green since Sentinel Hill Road and Derby-Milford Road will be operating on separate phases.
2. A police officer from the neighboring town of Orange commented that Derby-Milford Road is too narrow for trucks further down the road, south of the intersection, and with the project putting in a truck turning apron it will invite more trucks to use the road. The existing road in the town of Orange is narrow and in poor condition. He felt that allowing through trucks will contribute to deterioration of the existing pavement and damaged mailboxes. The road will remain signed “No Thru Trucks” after project completion but the Department has to provide reasonable access for the trucks going to Greco and Haines Inc. and the residential properties/businesses in the area. The proposed truck apron is needed to accommodate these trucks headed to local destinations but should not encourage through trucks.
3. One resident was concerned with having to wait coming down Sentinel Hill Road onto Derby-Milford Road with the two proposed left turn lanes. With the new traffic signal, the two side streets will be operating on separate phases allowing each of the local roads to move freely without conflicts of opposing traffic.
4. There was a question whether there would be any pedestrian accommodations within the project. A 5-foot wide shoulder will be installed with the project along Route 34 to accommodate the bus stops and pedestrians in the area. There will be a pedestrian push button installed with the new traffic signal, which matches the existing conditions.
5. Residents asked, with the project not being constructed for another 2 years, could Derby-Milford Road be temporarily striped with an exclusive left lane and a thru-right lane at the intersection? The Department agreed to review this recommendation and whether the existing width could accommodate two striped lanes and the number of cars it would fit.
6. Some residents were concerned with road closures during construction. There will be alternating one-way traffic on the local roads with flaggers to maintain traffic at all times outside of peak hours. No detours are being proposed.

7. After the question and answer session was completed a resident inquired whether Derby-Milford Road could be cut back further westward or back to its original alignment from the 1950's. It was explained that due to the grade change between Route 34 and Derby-Milford Road it would not be a feasible option with having a downgrade over 14%. Also, with the presence of the existing median on Route 34, Derby-Milford Road would no longer be accessible from Route 34 westbound.

The consensus was that the proposed improvements will be beneficial in relieving the backup on Derby-Milford Road and the attendees were supportive of the project. Careful consideration will be given to the design of the truck apron to minimize the appearance that Derby-Milford Road should be used by through trucks.